

# **Is This Effective Communication?**

It so happened that there turned out to be  
a grand total of five persons among the  
onlookers and spectators who were  
equipped with shovels as part of their  
emergency paraphernalia.

# **How About This?**

Five spectators had  
shovels.

# **The Mandate (Quality of Writing)**

Department of the Army writing will be clear, concise, and effective. Army correspondence must aid effective and efficient communication and decision making.

**AR 25-50**

# **Army Writing Standards**

- Effective Army writing:
  - transmits a clear message in a single, rapid reading.
  - is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage.
- Good Army writing:
  - is concise, organized, and right to the point.
  - two essential requirements include--

**AR 25-50**

# **Active and Passive Voice**

**ACTIVE VOICE - occurs when the subject of the sentence does the action.**

**PASSIVE VOICE - occurs when the subject of the sentence receives the action.**

# **Subject vs Doer**

***Doer of Action***



***Active***

SGT Jones counseled PVT Smith.



***Subject of sentence***

***Passive***

PVT Smith was counseled by SGT Jones.



***Subject of sentence  
action***



***Doer of***

# **The Emphasis**

The squad leaders assist the platoon sergeant.

***subject***  
***(doer)***

***verb***

***receiver of the action***

The platoon sergeant is assisted by the squad  
leaders.

***subject***  
***(receiver)***

# **Recognizing Passive Voice**

Uses some form of the verb “to be”:

am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been

plus (+)

main verb form ending usually in “ed,” “en,” or “t”  
(past participle form)

Examples: were completed, is requested, was seen, are written, was sent



## **Active or Passive?**

1. The Commander briefed the company.
2. The squad leaders were asked by the platoon sergeant to provide input.
3. PVT Jones is being taken to the hospital by SGT Smith.
4. SPC Green was relieved by the sergeant of the guard.
5. SPC Jones fired expert at the range.

# **Rules for Constructing Military Correspondence**

- **Use short words.**
- **Keep sentences short.**
- **Write paragraphs that, with few exceptions, are no more than 10 lines.**
- **Avoid jargon.**
- **Use I, you, and we as subjects of sentences instead of this office, this headquarters, etc.**
- **Avoid sentences that begin with “It is...,” “There is...,” or “There are....”**
- **Write one-page letters and memorandums for most correspondence.**
- **Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.**